

# BLORE HEATH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
For the year ending 31st December,  
1919.

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To the Rural District Council of Blore  
Heath.

Gentlemen,—I have the honour to submit to you my annual report upon the health of your district for the year 1919.

## NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

I. POPULATION.—At the last census (1911) the population of the district was 2,287. The estimated population at the middle of 1914 was 2,338. The Registrar-General estimates the population for 1919 at 2,098 for the death-rate and 2,185 for the birth-rate. The death-rate population excludes all non-civilian males, whether serving at home or abroad. The birth-rate (and marriage-rate) population includes all the elements contributing to the birth and marriage

rates, and consists therefore of the death-rate or civilian population plus all non-civilians enlisted from this country. This non-civilian element has been distributed over all the districts in the country in proportion to their estimated civilian population. The estimate of the civilian population is based mainly upon the rationing returns placed at the Registrar-General's disposal by the Ministry of Food. The birth, marriage, and death-rates are calculated on the Registrar-General's estimates.

## II. SPECIAL FEATURES AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS. —

The Rural District of Blore Heath has an area of upwards of 13,660 acres, and comprises the three parishes of Ashley, Mucklestone and Tyrley. The parishes of Mucklestone and Tyrley include some very fertile, highly cultivated land, but as these parishes rise towards that of Ashley the land becomes poorer in quality. At Ashley begin the moorlands of Staffordshire, the southern extremity of the Pennine Range. Ashley Heath is upwards of 750 feet above sea level, and is the highest cultivated table land in England. The trend of the drainage of the district is for the most part westward to the River Tern, except the eastern portion of Ashley parish, which is drained by tributaries of the River Sow. The springs forming the source of the Market Drayton Water Company's supply are situate in the Burnt Wood and the mains are laid through the fields upon which the battle of Blore Heath was fought in 1459. An area of 245 acres of the Burnt Wood has been recently acquired by the Joint Sanatorium Committee on behalf of the following authorities :—Cheshire County Council, and the County Borough Councils of Birkenhead, Chester, Stockport, Wallasey, and Stoke-upon-Trent, and a large sanatorium for the treatment of patients suffering from tuberculosis is about to be built.

## III. VITAL STATISTICS.

MARRIAGES.—The number of marriages registered during the calendar

year was 23, being at the rate of 10.5 per 1,000 of the estimated population.

**BIRTHS.**—Forty seven births (26 boys and 21 girls) were registered. Of these, seven (3 boys and 4 girls) were illegitimate. The birth-rate was 21.5 per 1,000.

**DEATHS.**—Twenty-one deaths were registered during the year. The death-rate was 10 per 1,000 of the estimated population per annum.

**INFANT MORTALITY.**—Two infants under one year of age died, giving an infant mortality rate of 42 per 1,000 births.

**CLASSIFICATION OF THE DEATHS.**—Of the 21 deaths, 11 were of persons of the age of 68 and upwards. Seven deaths were certified as due to influenza, five to heart disease, three each to bronchitis and cancer, and one to tuberculosis.

**AMOUNT OF POOR LAW RELIEF.**—Cost of Poor Law relief in the Drayton Union during year ended 30th September, 1919 :—Institutional relief, £933 10s. 8½d. ; average cost per head, per week, 9s. 8d. ; out-door relief, £605 0s. 6d. ; average per head per week of persons relieved, 3s. 2d. ; average per case per week, 5s. 6d.

**SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT WATER.**—The water supply of the district in general is sufficient and the quality good. A few houses are supplied by the Market Drayton Water Company. In Mucklestone, Winnington, Napley, and Aston, there are public supplies from springs in the neighbourhood, but the supply of the houses in the rest of the district is obtained from rams, pump-wells, and draw-wells.

**DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.**—A scheme for the drainage and sewerage of Knighton is under consideration.

**SANITARY INSPECTION.** — The number of houses inspected during the

year, either in connection with outbreaks of infectious disease, or in consequence of complaints, or in the course of a systematic sanitary survey, was 157. The number of legal notices sent was 14; the number of informal notices sent, 109; number of such notices complied with, 85; number of letters written, 42. The sanitary matters referred to in the notices sent were:—(a) Houses to be disinfected after infectious disease, 4; (b) deficient or objectionable water supply, 14; (c) new drains to be constructed, or old drains to be amended, 57; (d) new closets to be provided or old ones to be amended in construction, 21; (e) houses damp or dirty, or admitting rain, or weather, or otherwise in a bad sanitary condition, 35; (f) offensive accumulations of all kinds, 54; (g) houses overcrowded, 3; houses disinfected after infectious disease (other than phthisis), 2; houses disinfected in cases of phthisis, 2; privies converted into water-closets, 1; plans for new houses passed, 3; certificate issued for water supply to new house, 1; repairs to public pumps and wells, 13; private wells reconstructed or improved, 7.

## FOOD.

1. MILK SUPPLY.—The number of cow-keepers and milksellers on the register is 21; number of cowsheds, 38; number of inspections, 25. Defects found in (1) Cowsheds:—(a) Floor or cubic space, 1; (b) ventilation, 1; (c) lighting, 1; (d) cleanliness, 6; (2) insanitary condition of drains, 4; (3) in water supply, 2; number of notices, verbal and written, 10; number of these notices complied with, 8; number of defects found and not yet remedied, 2.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—Nine cases of infectious diseases were notified during the year:—Measles 4, scarlet fever 2, puerperal fever 1, ophthalmia neonatorum 1, and pulmonary tuberculosis 1. One of the scarlet fever cases was removed to the Isolation Hospital, the other was isolated at home.



The case of ophthalmia neonatorum was cured. Diphtheria antitoxin is used in all cases of diphtheria. The supply and the injection of the antitoxin is paid for by the Council. Swabs from the throats of diphtheria patients and sputum from tuberculous patients are examined for the bacilli at the University of Birmingham, by arrangement with the Staffordshire County Council. In all notified cases of infectious disease, printed instructions are sent to the occupiers of the houses infected, stating the precautions to be taken in order to prevent the spread of infection, and as to keeping children from school. Notices are also sent to the school teachers stating the periods children from infected houses are to be excluded from school. Where unsanitary conditions are found they are reported to the Council or dealt with by the Sanitary Inspector. At the termination of all cases, and immediately after removal of patients to the Isolation Hospital, disinfection and efficient cleansing of infected rooms are carried out under the direction of the Sanitary Inspector. At the Isolation Hospital a steam disinfecter is used for clothing, etc., before the patient is allowed to leave. The Isolation Hospital is at Little Drayton, and contains four wards with sixteen beds, and the nurses' rooms.

SCHOOLS.—The water supply and drainage of the Schools in the district are satisfactory. Hales and Aston schools were closed for a fortnight in March and Mucklestone school for a month on account of the prevalence of influenza

#### SMALL-POX. — VACCINATION IN 1919.

The following statistics of vaccination have been supplied by the Vaccination Officer:—Of the forty-seven children born and registered, twenty-four were successfully vaccinated, two died unvaccinated, two were removed from the district, six were not of age at the end of the year, and thirteen remain unvaccinated because their parents had conscientious objections to vaccination,

and made statutory declarations to that effect. No primary vaccinations or re-vaccinations have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1917. The joint isolation hospital for small-pox is at Prees Heath.

**MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.**—Two district nurses (certificated midwives), one stationed at Blackbrook, the other at Hales, carry out this work in a very efficient manner when the extent of the district is considered, as health visitors, under superintendence from Stafford. One case of puerperal fever and one case of ophthalmia neonatorum were notified, and both recovered. Two infants died—one from atelectasis, living only one hour, and the other from gastritis at the age of twelve days.

The district is very wide for only two nurses to do the work. The births were forty-seven. If they were evenly distributed throughout the year the work could be easily carried out, but when the births occur in numbers together, and widely apart in locality, it is difficult for two nurses to give all the attention required to the mothers and infants, especially in winter.

## HOUSING.

**1.—GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS IN THE DISTRICT.**—The number of dwelling-houses in the district is 511. Of these, 415 are working-class houses (at rentals from 2s. to 5s. per week). The estimated population at the middle of 1919 was 2,317.

**2.—OVERCROWDING.**—There are twenty-five houses with more than two occupants per room. The total number of occupiers is 167. Six houses intended for one family only are now occupied by two or more families.

**3.—ESTIMATE OF HOUSING NEEDS.**—Working-class houses required during the next three years to (a) meet the unsatisfied demand for houses, taking account of growth of

population, overcrowding, etc., 25; (b) replace other dwellings which are unfit for human habitation, and cannot be made fit, 3; (c) replace other houses, which, although they cannot at present be regarded as unfit for human habitation, fall definitely below a reasonable standard, 18; total 46. Deduct (a) working-class houses likely to be built during the next three years by persons other than the local authority, 16; net estimate of number of houses required, 30.

The Council have adopted a scheme for the building of twenty-eight houses on eight sites in the parishes of Ashley. Mucklestone, and Tyrley. The approximate acreage of land to be acquired is about 4 acres, and the average number of houses per acre is eight. The cost of the eight sites is £820, and the cost of building the twenty-eight houses is £25,900.

4.—FITNESS OF HOUSES.—Under the Housing and Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909, and Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, thirty-eight houses were inspected. In twenty-three of these the defects found were remedied without closing orders, and fifteen houses are still under consideration. The general character of the defects found in the course of this inspection were (1) closet accommodation 6; (2) drainage 14; (3) dampness 6; (4) cleanliness 1; (5) other defects 35.

5.—UNHEALTHY AREAS.—There are no unhealthy areas in the district.

I am, yours faithfully,

ARCHIBALD MACQUEEN, M.D.,  
Market Drayton,  
23rd August, 1920.

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